The Great Virginia Teach-In:
A Call to Teach

The Great Virginia Teach-In

Evaluation Report

May 2004

Executive Summary

The evaluation of the Great Virginia Teach-In was based on information collected from two primary groups: the school divisions that participated and the teacher candidates that attended the Teach-In. Two types of information were collected from participants of each group: attendance data derived from registration information and survey information collected by the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure of the Virginia Department of Education. The following are some of the highlights of the evaluation results.

Teacher Candidates

- o Overall, there were **3,824** attendees: **2,976 (77.8%)** were from Virginia, **788 (20.6%)** came from out-of-state, representing 42 states, including the District of Columbia, one military base, and one foreign country (England), and **60 (1.6%)** did not report a residence.

- o Out-of-state: Pennsylvania led all states with 148 attendees, followed by Maryland with 132, New York with 100, North Carolina with 73, and New Jersey with 38.

- o In-state: Superintendent's Region 1 was the most represented with **1,451**, followed by Region IV with **528**, and Region II with **333**. Region VII had the least number of attendees with **29**.

- o Of the **3,824** attendees, there were **1,411 (36.9%)** qualified teachers, **1,831 (47.9%)** aspiring teachers, **534 (14.0%)** future teachers, and **48 (1.3%)** who did not indicate a qualification level.

- o The average attendee's response to the survey question about the impact of the Teach-In on his or her decision to become a licensed teacher in Virginia was **4.34** (on a scale of one to five).

- o The average attendee's response to the survey question about the impact of the Teach-In on his or her ability to become a more effective teacher was **4.10** (on a scale of one to five).

- o The average attendee's response to the survey question about the effectiveness of the Teach-In in enabling him or her to achieve professional goals was **4.38** (on a scale of one to five).

School Divisions

o   102 of 132 school divisions (77%) participated in the Teach-In.

o   By Superintendent's Region, Region VIII had a 100% participation rate, followed by Regions I and II each with a 93% participation rate, and Region IV with a 90% participation rate. Region VII had the lowest participation rate of 39%, followed by Region VI with a rate of 56%.

o   28 of the 34 high-poverty urban and rural school divisions attended the Teach-In.

o   77 of the 102 participating school divisions responded to the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure survey about the Great Virginia Teach-In.

o   Recruitment expectations: 60 school divisions (78%) indicated that their recruitment expectations were met; 12 school divisions (16%) indicated that their expectations were not met; 5 school divisions (6%) did not respond to this question.

o   Number of quality candidates: **65 divisions (84%)** reported seeing at least 50 quality candidates; **43 divisions (56%)** reported seeing at least 100 quality candidates; **16 divisions (21%)** reported seeing at least 200 quality candidates.

o   Number of quality candidates: **17 of the 28** high-poverty urban and rural school divisions reported seeing at least 50 quality candidates; **7 of the 28** reported seeing at least 100 quality candidates.

o   Overall satisfaction with the Teach-In was high. Forty-five out of 77 divisions rated the Teach-In as 5 (on a scale of one to five); 28 divisions rated the Teach-In as 4 (on a scale of one to five); 1 division rated the Teach-In as 3 (on a scale of one to five); and 3 divisions did not rate the Teach-In.

o   Overall average rating of the Teach-In was **4.59**.

o   Would the school divisions support another Teach-In? Seventy-seven out of 77 school divisions responded "Yes."

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Great Virginia Teach-In, held March 26-28, 2004, was Virginia's first statewide teacher recruitment event. The Virginia Department of Education has been aware that for school divisions, especially those in the more remote areas, to be successful at hiring teachers, they would need to increase awareness of their teaching opportunities. As a result of a federal Teacher Quality Enhancement grant, the Virginia Department of Education's Division of Teacher Education and Licensure was able to host the Great Virginia Teach-In. The initial plan was two-fold: (1) bring together as many qualified teaching candidates as possible to one location, giving them the opportunity to meet and speak with representatives of most, if not all, of Virginia's 132 school divisions, and (2) increase public awareness of all of the state's school divisions, and thereby increase the number of teachers available.

Were we successful at achieving our objectives? At first, there was some uncertainty as to how to develop a system for determining success of the event. The Teach-In was a first-time initiative; the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure had never been faced with the responsibility of evaluating a recruitment fair. The U.S. Department of Education has reporting requirements specifically for measuring Teacher Quality Enhancement program accountability, but these standards represent broad parameters of teacher quality enhancement and were not particularly helpful in developing a detailed evaluation plan. One of the seven requirements – increasing the percentage of teachers who have adequate content knowledge in the subjects they are teaching – relates to teacher recruitment, but could not be measured at this time since most of the school divisions had not yet completed their teacher hiring for the 2004-05 academic year. As a result, school divisions could not determine to what extent increases in the percentage of teachers with adequate content knowledge can be attributed to the Teach-In.

As the Teach-In concept evolved, developing an evaluation plan became more complex due to the expansion of program activities. In addition to school divisions and teacher candidates, the scope of the Teach-In included undergraduate and graduate-level state-approved teacher education programs, the state-approved Career Switcher programs (Career Switcher refers to the state's alternative teacher licensure program), and corporate sponsors with an interest in exhibiting at the Teach-In (e.g., the Educational Testing Service and Bank of America's Mortgage Retail Lending). Widening the scope of the program included individuals who were ready to teach, but also individuals with a variety of teaching qualifications and backgrounds. The teacher candidate would encompass not only the licensed teacher from Tennessee, but also the potential Career Switcher from Leesburg, Virginia, the retired military officer from Fort Belvoir, and the James River High School student considering teaching as a career.

The evaluation plan that was adopted responded to the original Teach-In plan in light of the diversity of the teacher candidates. On the one hand, Division of Teacher Education and

Licensure staff members gathered information about the school divisions, e.g., which divisions participated; where are they located; their goals for the Teach-In; their overall level of satisfaction; etc. On the other hand, staff members also gathered information about the teacher candidates, according to broad levels of qualification and background called strands. Instead of reporting the data in terms of a generic teacher candidate, the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure reported the data by strand and by categories within each strand. Evaluating the Teach-In in this manner, the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure was not only able to determine whether the two original Teach-In objectives had been successfully achieved, but also to ascertain the type of teacher candidate that was attracted to and benefited most from the Teach-In.

Virginia Tech's Center for Organization and Technological Advance (COTA) provided registration services at the Teach-In and was the principal source of attendance information for both the teacher candidates and the school divisions. The Division of Teacher Education and Licensure personnel used surveys to gather information about the impact of the Teach-In. Teacher candidates and school divisions were asked to complete survey forms to provide this information and their results provide the basis for this report.

I. History and Background

The Governor's first Great Virginia Teach-In was conducted at the Richmond Convention Center, Richmond, Virginia, on March 26-28, 2004. This historic event was established as one of the Governor's recruitment initiatives and proclaimed by the 2004 General Assembly in House Joint Resolution No. 168 as the Great Virginia Teach-In. The enhanced job fair featured teacher preparation programs, professional educational organizations, school division recruiters, and exhibitors to attract a wider and more diverse pool of teaching applicants to the state. The two-and-a-half day event was kicked off with a pre-Teach-In institute for human resource personnel and teacher educators, and a reception for participating partners, hosted by the Governor and funded by a donation from Virginia Troops to Teachers, on Friday, March 26, 2004.

Program Features

Program features on the agenda for March 27 and 28 included:

- More than 57 concurrent workshop sessions;
- Three institutes focusing on mentoring programs for hard-to-staff schools, the New Teacher Project, and high school Teachers for Tomorrow programs;
- On-site specialists from the Virginia Department of Education and selected school divisions to review and advise prospective teachers on licensure issues;
- 102 of the 132 school divisions and three governor's schools – Appomattox Regional Governor's School, the Governor's School for Global Economics, and the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for International Relations;
- Regional special education programs – New Horizons Regional Education Center, Southeastern Cooperative Education Program, Virginia School for the Deaf, Blind, and Multi-Disabled (Hampton), and the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind (Staunton);
- Nine Career Switcher Programs for alternative routes to licensure;
- 20 of the 37 state-approved teacher education programs that prepare school personnel;
- Major professional organizations in the state, including the Association of Teacher Educators in Virginia, Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education, Virginia Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Virginia Association of School Personnel Administrators, Virginia Association of School Superintendents, Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers, Virginia Education Association, Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure, Virginia Milken Educators Network, and several others; and
- Several vendors and exhibitors.

Target Audience

Throughout the planning process, the event targeted individuals fully licensed to teach; those preparing to become teachers, including high school students and members of the Virginia Student Education Association; individuals who are considering switching careers and becoming teachers; and retired teachers considering returning to the profession.

II. Evaluation Results

A. Teacher Candidate Attendance According to Residency

A total of 3,824 prospective teachers attended the Great Virginia Teach-In. Of this total, 2,976 (approximately 78 percent) claimed Virginia as their state of residence; 788 (20.5 percent) indicated their residence as being outside of Virginia; and 60 (roughly 1.5 percent) did not indicate a residence. While it was expected that most of the attendees would come from Virginia, organizers were pleased to see that more than a fifth of the attendance was composed of individuals residing outside the commonwealth. Figure 1 provides an overview of the attendance according to residency.
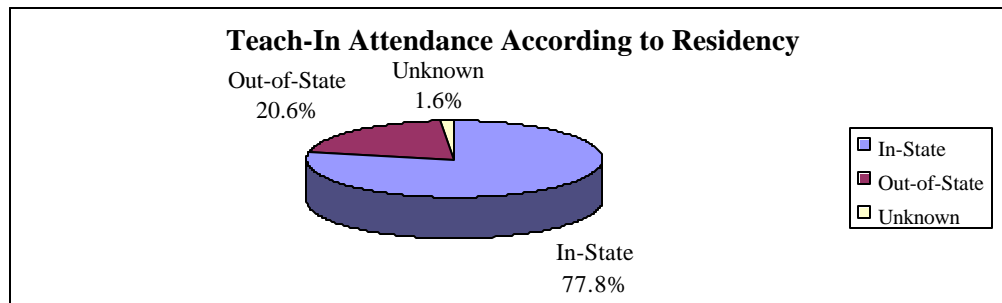

Figure 1

Out-of-State Participation

During the preparation of the Teach-In, the Virginia Department of Education was keenly interested in attracting teacher candidates from outside the state. Teach-In posters and brochures were mailed to all undergraduate and graduate-level teacher preparation programs across the country and to all community colleges in states that border Virginia (Maryland, the District of Columbia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina). The Teach-In was advertised in local and national newspapers (daily and weekly), education and military journals, on radio and television, in the following states:

Arkansas	Maryland	Oklahoma
Connecticut	Minnesota	Pennsylvania
Delaware	New Jersey	South Carolina
District of Columbia	New York	Tennessee
Kentucky	North Carolina	Wisconsin

By advertising in these states, the Virginia Department of Education wanted to make sure to target not only neighboring states, but also the five states that historically have been teacher "exporters," or states that have produced more teachers than they need: Connecticut, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

The effort worked. Approximately 788 of the 3,824 teacher candidates who attended reside outside of Virginia (approximately 21 percent) and represent 42 states, including the District of Columbia, one military base, and one foreign country (England). More people came to the Teach-In from Pennsylvania (148) than from any other state, followed by Maryland (132) and New York (100). Listed below in Table I are the states represented at the Teach-In, including the number of participants representing each state and their approximate percentages in parentheses (based on a total of 788 out-of-state participants).

Table 1. Out-of-State Representation by State, Participant Total, and Percentage (in parentheses)

Alabama – 5 (0.6)	Kentucky – 4 (0.5)	North Dakota – 1 (0.1)
Arizona – 4 (0.5)	Louisiana – 2 (0.3)	Ohio – 38 (4.8)
Arkansas – 2 (0.3)	Maine – 1 (0.1)	Oklahoma – 3 (0.4)
California – 15 (1.9)	Maryland – 132 (16.8)	Oregon – 1 (0.1)
Colorado – 6 (0.8)	Massachusetts – 13 (1.7)	Pennsylvania – 148 (18.8)
Connecticut – 16 (2.0)	Michigan – 18 (2.3)	Rhode Island – 1 (0.1)
District of Columbia – 20 (2.6)	Minnesota – 3 (0.4)	South Carolina – 12 (1.5)
Delaware – 5 (0.6)	Mississippi – 3 (0.4)	Tennessee – 15 (1.9)
Florida – 24 (3.0)	Missouri – 1 (0.1)	Texas – 7 (0.9)
Georgia – 18 (2.3)	New Hampshire – 3 (0.4)	Vermont – 3 (0.4)
Iowa – 3 (0.4)	New Jersey – 39 (4.9)	Washington – 3 (0.4)
Illinois – 6 (0.8)	New Mexico – 1 (0.1)	West Virginia – 23 (2.9)
Indiana – 6 (0.8)	New York – 100 (12.8)	Wisconsin – 5 (0.6)
Kansas – 2 (0.3)	North Carolina – 73 (9.3)	Wyoming – 1 (0.1)
	Non-states – 2 (0.3)	

Seven of the top nine states are not surprises because of either their proximity to Virginia or their history of being teacher exporters, including the top five – Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, and New Jersey. The other two are somewhat surprising in that Florida has historically been an "importer" of teachers and Florida and Ohio can hardly be considered neighbors of Virginia. In terms of distance alone, one might have expected a greater number of prospective teachers from Virginia's more immediate neighbors, such as Kentucky, Tennessee, or Delaware, than from either of those two states. Figure 2 identifies the top nine states (other than Virginia) represented at the Teach-In and the number of attendees from each state.
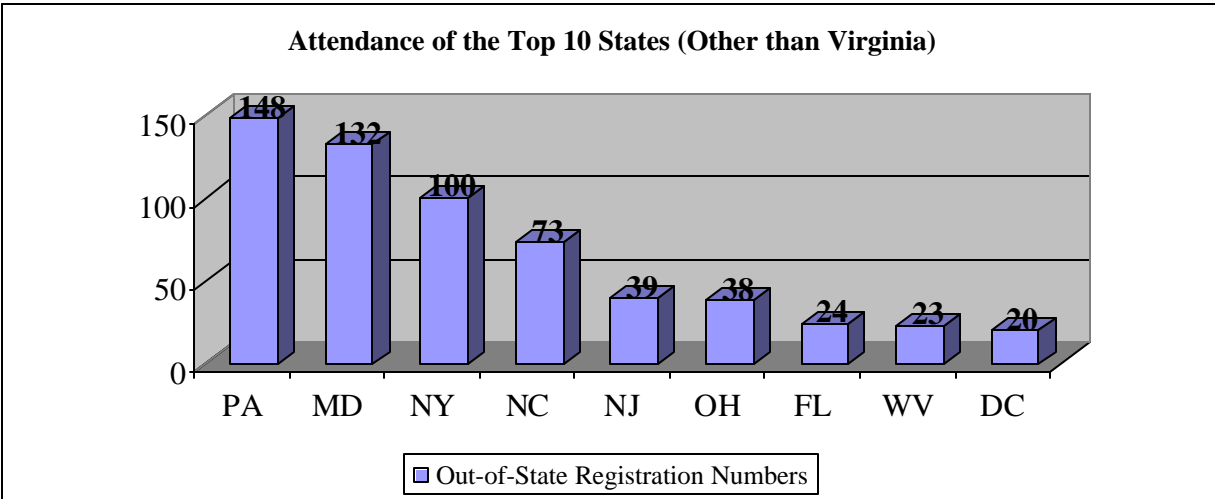
Attendance of the Top 10 States (Other than Virginia)

Figure 2

In-State Participation

As mentioned earlier, Virginia attendees outnumbered out-of-state registrants by almost four to one. Virginians represented approximately 286 localities in more than 100 counties and cities. Of those claiming Virginia residency, almost half (48.8 percent) came from those jurisdictions located in Superintendent's Study Region I (Central Virginia), which includes the city of Richmond. Superintendent's Study Region IV (Northern Virginia) had the second highest attendance with 528, followed by Region II (Tidewater) with 333. Superintendent's Study Region VII, which represents Southwest Virginia, had the lowest representation at the Teach-In with 29 attendees (1.0 percent). Figure 3 reflects a ranked breakdown of the 2,976 in-state participants by superintendent's study region.

In-State Attendance Rank by Superintendent's Study Region
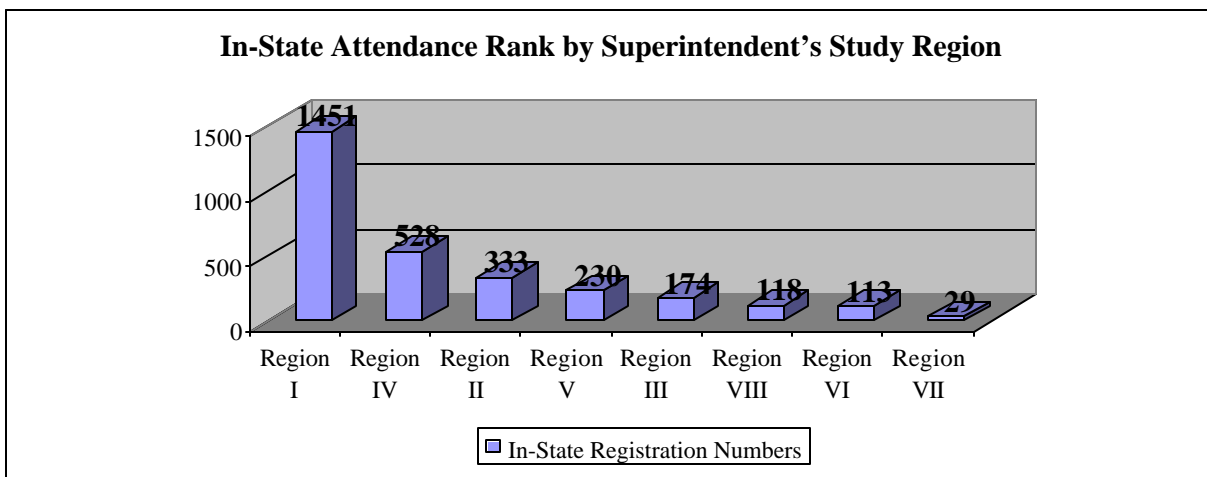

Figure 3

B. Teacher Candidate Attendance According to Qualification Level

In addition to residency, Teach-In organizers wanted to be able to capture data as to each attendee's qualification level. When attendees registered, they were asked a series of questions to determine where they were in the teacher preparation process, including how they thought they should be classified. Based on their answers, each individual was assigned to one of the following three strands:

Strand I – Qualified Teacher
Strand II – Aspiring Teacher
Strand III – Future Teacher

In terms of attendance numbers (see Figure 4), 1,411 participants (36.9 percent) identified themselves as "Qualified"; 1,831 (47.9 percent) as "Aspiring"; and 534 (14.0 percent) as "Future." A total of 48 (1.3 percent) did not indicate a strand. (The total percentage is slightly more than 100 due to rounding.)
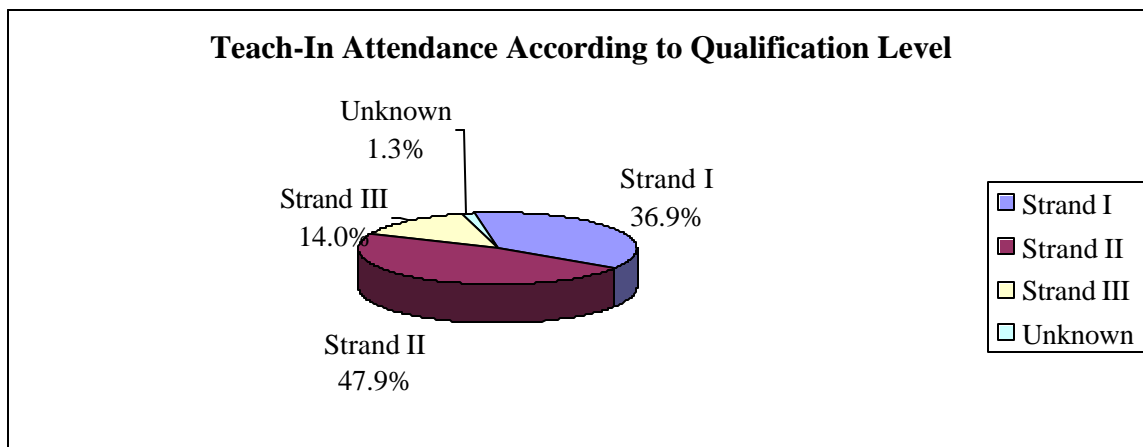
Figure 4

Strand I – Qualified Teacher

To be considered a "Qualified" teacher, an individual must have identified himself or herself as belonging to one of the following categories:

1. Current teacher with a teaching license or certificate
2. Individual in a Career Switcher program
3. Pre-service teacher (i.e., a college student in an approved teacher preparation program)
4. Retiree with a teaching license or certificate
5. Teacher with an expired teaching license or certificate

In a few cases, individuals identified themselves as "Qualified," or belonging to Strand I, without indicating a category. A breakdown of Strand I categories in terms of attendance is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Strand I Categories in Terms of Attendance

1.	Current teacher with a teaching license/certificate	763
2.	Individual in a Career Switcher program	169
3.	Pre-service teacher	315
4.	Retiree with a teaching license or certificate	23
5.	Teacher with an expired teaching license or certificate	120
6.	Unknown	21
	Total	**1,411**

Figure 5 shows the Strand I categories by percentage.
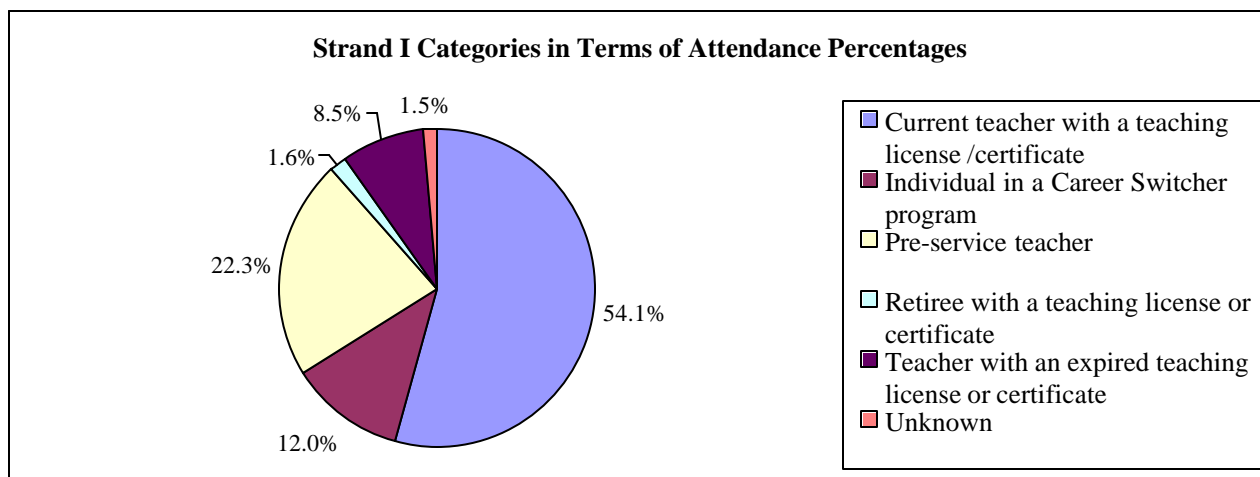
Figure 5

Strand II – Aspiring Teacher

Individuals were designated Strand II, or "Aspiring," if they identified themselves as belonging to one of the following categories:

1. A graduate of an arts and sciences program (B.A. or B.S. before September 2004)
2. Paraprofessional or substitute with a bachelor's degree
3. Potential Career Switcher (an individual in another career with a bachelor's degree and interested in teaching)
4. Pre-service teacher who will earn a degree after September 2004
5. Retiree without a teaching license or certificate

An unexpectedly large number of Strand II registrants identified themselves as being an "Aspiring" teacher without indicating a category. A breakdown of Strand II categories in terms of attendance is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Strand II Categories in Terms of Attendance

1.	Graduate of an arts and sciences program (B.A. or B.S. before September 2004)	601
2.	Paraprofessional or substitute with a bachelor's degree	193
3.	Potential Career Switcher	766
4.	Pre-service teacher earning a degree after September 2004	147
7.	Retiree without a teaching license or certificate	24
8.	Unknown	100
	Total	**1,831**

Figure 6 shows the Strand II categories by percentage. (The total percentage is slightly less than 100 due to rounding.)

Strand II Categories in Terms of Attendance Percentages

32.8%
10.5%
5.5%
1.3%
8.0%
41.8%

☐ Graduate of an A&S program (B.A./B.S. before 09/2004)
☐ Paraprofessional or substitute with a bachelor's degree
☐ Potential Career Switcher
☐ Pre-service teacher earning a degree after 09/2004
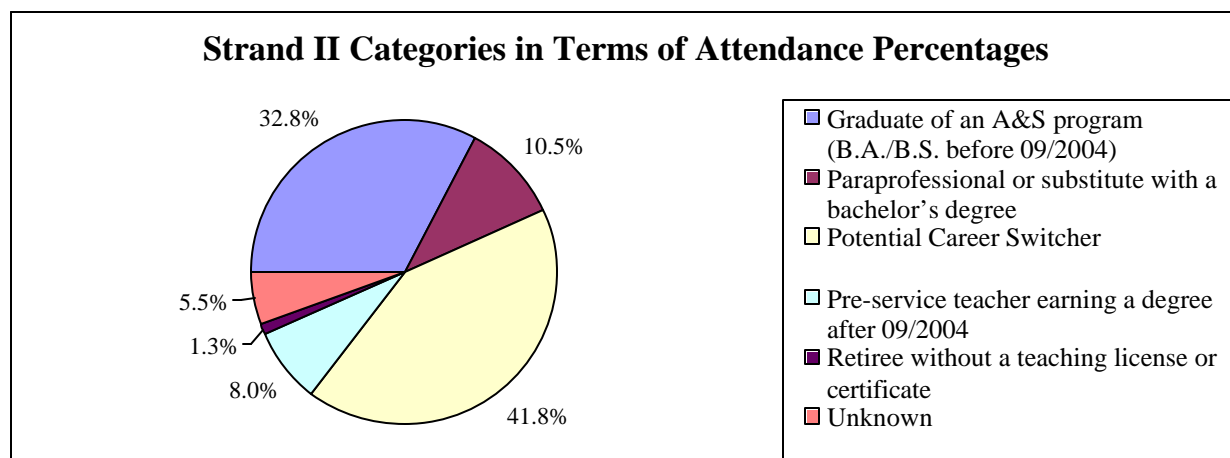☐ Retiree without a teaching license or certificate
☐ Unknown

Figure 6

Strand III – Future Teachers

Individuals were considered to be "Future," or belonging to Strand III, if they were in one of the following categories:

1. High school student
2. Paraprofessional or substitute teacher without a bachelor's degree
3. High school student chaperone
4. Other

In a few cases, individuals classified themselves as "Future" without indicating a category. A breakdown of Strand III categories in terms of attendance is provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Strand III Categories in Terms of Attendance

1. High school student   184
2. Paraprofessional/substitute teacher without bachelor's degree   69
3. High school student chaperone   36
4. Other   229
5. Unknown   16
    Total   **534**

Figure 7 shows the Strand III categories by percentage. (The total percentage is slightly more than 100 due to rounding.)

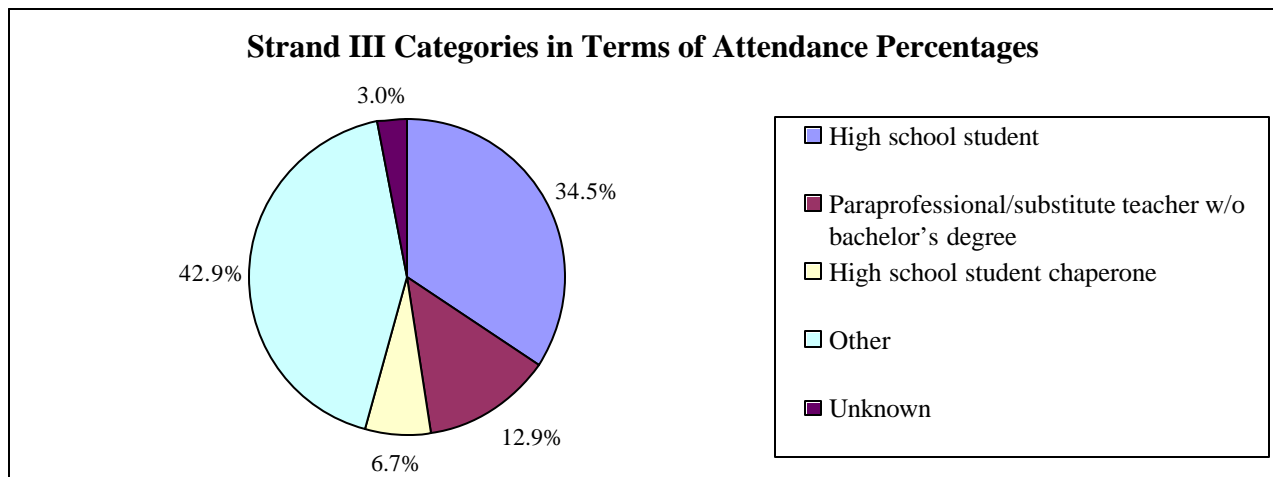Figure 7

C. Impact of the Teach-In on the Teacher Candidates

The responses to the survey of attendees conducted by the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure indicated that the Teach-In was beneficial to them.

The survey was based on the following three questions about each individual's professional expectations. Respondents were asked to rate their answers on a scale of one to five.

1. What impact has your participation in the Teach-In had on your decision to become a licensed teacher in Virginia?
2. What impact has your participation in the Teach-In had on your ability to become a more effective teacher?
3. How effective was the Teach-In in enabling you to meet your professional goals?

The results were positive. The overall average response to the first question was 4.34; the overall average response to the second question was 4.10; and the overall average response to the third question was 4.38.

Reporting these responses as an aggregate, however, does not reveal the impact of the Teach-In in terms of the diversity of the teacher candidate profile. A paraprofessional, for instance, will not have the same career or professional expectations as a teacher education graduate from Texas or a just-retired military officer with a math background looking for a second career as a teacher. To determine who actually benefited from the Teach-In, the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure developed a survey that would capture these distinctions. In addition to answering a series of questions about the Teach-In, participants were asked to identify which of the following teacher preparation categories best described them:

Licensed teacher (Virginia)
Licensed teacher (out-of-state)
2004 graduate of a teacher preparation program
Potential Career Switcher
College student graduating in 2005 or later
Paraprofessional or substitute teacher
High school student
Other

Figure 8 shows the results of the attendee survey according to teacher preparation level and background. Both paraprofessionals and current college students considered the Teach-In to be extremely effective in helping them meet their professional goals, responding to the third question with an average of 4.80.

On the other hand, both Virginia and out-of-state licensed teachers felt the Teach-In to be most effective in leading them to decide to become licensed teachers in Virginia, responding to the first question with averages of 4.57 and 4.58, respectively. In terms of the impact of the Teach-In to enhance their ability to become more effective teachers, current college students were most positive, responding to this question with an average of 4.60. While there appears to have been

some room for improving the Teach-In in this regard, the results are encouraging and indicate that the Teach-In was effective in helping meet the professional needs of attendees.

Impact of the Teach-In on Teacher Candidates (on a scale of one to five)
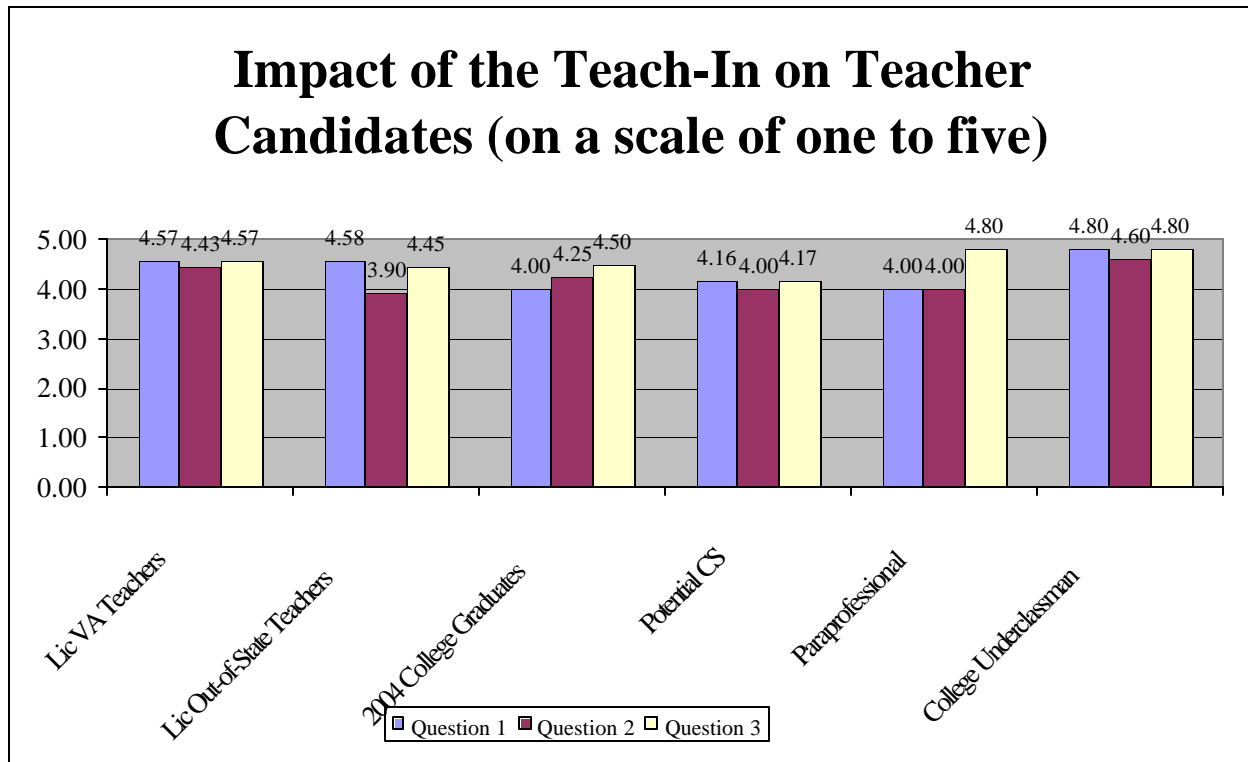

Figure 8

D. School Division Participation

Although different groups were featured during the Teach-In, the core purpose for sponsoring the event was to assist Virginia's school divisions with their recruitment efforts and especially to address their critical shortage area needs. School divisions first received official notice about the Teach-In through a Superintendent's Informational Memo (#220) dated December 19, 2003. A series of follow-up correspondences from the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure was sent to provide school divisions with supplemental information about the Teach-In. Of Virginia's 132 school divisions, 106 indicated that they would send representatives. Because of schedule conflicts and other last-minute situations, 102 school divisions were able to participate.

By many accounts, the Teach-In was a huge success. During the Teach-In and immediately after, several school division representatives shared with the State Superintendent and Division of Teacher Education and Licensure personnel their appreciation of the efforts of the Virginia Department of Education to organize and host such an event. Many expressed hope that this inaugural effort would mark the beginning of an annual Teach-In.

To determine whether there is sufficient basis for holding the Teach-In again next year, the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure developed a survey for the school divisions to evaluate the impact of the Teach-In on their recruitment efforts. While the real impact will not be known until this fall when the Virginia Department of Education requests information from the school divisions about the number of teachers hired as a result of the Teach-In, their grade level, subject-area, etc., there was other information that Division of Teacher Education and Licensure staff members wanted to gather while the experience of the Teach-In was still fresh in the minds of division representatives, such as hiring goals, the number of visitors each division experienced in comparison with similar events last year (if they participated in them), and overall satisfaction with the Teach-In. Of the 102 school divisions that participated in the Teach-In, the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure received 77 completed survey forms (75 percent). Table 5 lists the 102 participating school divisions by superintendent's study region.

Table 5. Participating School Divisions by Superintendent's Study Regions

Region I	Region II
Charles City Public Schools	Accomack County Public Schools
Chesterfield County Public Schools	Chesapeake City Public Schools
Dinwiddie County Public Schools	Franklin City Public Schools
Goochland County Public Schools	Hampton City Public Schools
Hanover County Public Schools	Isle of Wight County Public Schools
Henrico County Public Schools	Newport News City Public Schools
Hopewell City Public Schools	Norfolk City Public Schools
New Kent County Public Schools	Northampton County Public Schools
Petersburg City Public Schools	Portsmouth City Public Schools
Powhatan County Public Schools	Southampton County Public Schools
Prince George County Public Schools	Suffolk City Public Schools
Richmond City Public Schools	Virginia Beach City Public Schools
Surry County Public Schools	Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools
Sussex County Public Schools	York County Public Schools

Region III
Caroline County Public Schools
Fredericksburg City Public Schools
Gloucester County Public Schools
King George County Public Schools
King and Queen County Public Schools
King William County Public Schools
Lancaster County Public Schools
Mathews County Public Schools
Middlesex County Public Schools
Richmond County Public Schools
Spotsylvania County Public Schools
Stafford County Public Schools
West Point Public Schools
Westmoreland County Public Schools

Region IV
Alexandria City Public Schools
Arlington County Public Schools
Clarke County Public Schools
Culpeper County Public Schools
Fairfax County Public Schools
Falls Church City Public Schools
Fauquier County Public Schools
Frederick County Public Schools
Loudoun County Public Schools
Madison County Public Schools
Manassas City Public Schools
Orange County Public Schools
Prince William County Public Schools
Rappahannock County Public Schools
Shenandoah County Public Schools
Warren County Public Schools
Winchester City Public Schools

Region V
Albemarle County Public Schools
Amherst County Public Schools
Appomattox County Public Schools
Augusta County Public Schools
Bath County Public Schools
Bedford County Public Schools
Campbell County Public Schools
Charlottesville City Public Schools
Fluvanna County Public Schools
Harrisonburg City Public Schools
Louisa County Public Schools
Lynchburg City Public Schools
Nelson County Public Schools
Rockingham County Public Schools
Staunton City Public Schools
Waynesboro City Public Schools

Region VI
Alleghany County Public Schools
Botetourt County Public Schools
Craig County Public Schools
Danville City Public Schools
Henry County Public Schools
Martinsville City Public Schools
Montgomery County Public Schools
Pittsylvania County Public Schools
Roanoke City Public Schools

Region VII
Galax City Public Schools
Grayson County Public Schools
Pulaski County Public Schools
Russell County Public Schools
Smyth County Public Schools
Tazewell County Public Schools
Wise County Public Schools

Region VIII
Amelia County Public Schools
Brunswick County Public Schools
Buckingham County Public Schools
Charlotte County Public Schools
Cumberland County Public Schools
Greensville County Public Schools
Halifax County Public Schools
Lunenburg County Public Schools
Mecklenburg County Public Schools
Nottoway County Public Schools
Prince Edward County Public Schools

Ideally, all of Virginia's 132 school divisions would have been able to participate at the Teach-In. A number of factors prevented some of the divisions from being able to send representation, e.g., schedule conflicts, lack of available staff, cost considerations, etc. Although one could interpret the rate of participation according to Superintendent's Study Regions as an indication of interest in the Teach-In, the number of reasons why a division was not able to participate is too large, rendering such an interpretation inconclusive.

Figure 9 identifies the number of school divisions that participated in the Teach-In according to Superintendent's Study Region. Based on these figures, the highest participation rate of 100 percent belongs to Region VIII with all 11 school divisions represented at the Teach-In, followed closely by Regions I, II, and IV with rates of approximately 93 percent, 93 percent, and 90 percent, respectively. The lowest rate belongs to Region VII with seven of the 18 divisions participating, or roughly 39 percent, followed in turn by Regions VI and V with rates of 56 and 76 percent, respectively. (It should be noted that three of the four school divisions that were not able to participate because of last-minute circumstances came from Region VII.) Overall, 102 of the 132 school divisions attended for an overall participation rate of 77 percent.
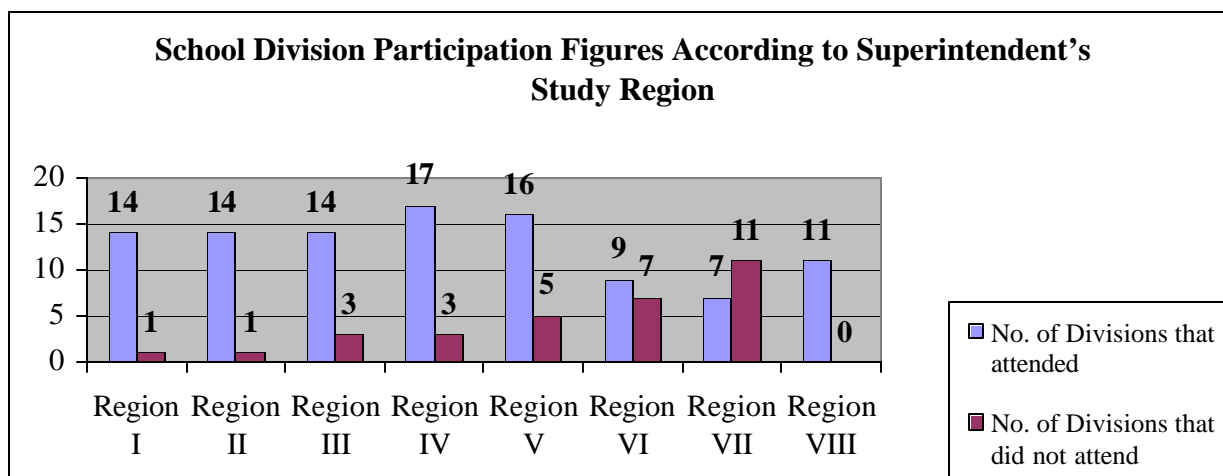

Figure 9

It is encouraging to note that the 102 participating school divisions include 28 of Virginia's 34 high-poverty urban and rural school divisions as defined by the federal government under Title II of the Higher Education Act. The 28 high-poverty urban and rural school divisions that participated in the Teach-In are listed below in Table 6.

Table 6. Virginia's High-Poverty Urban and Rural School Divisions that Participated in the Great Virginia Teach-In

Accomack County	Greensville County	Petersburg City
Bedford County	Hopewell City	Portsmouth City
Brunswick County	Lancaster County	Prince Edward County

Buckingham County   Lunenburg County   Richmond City
Charlottesville City   Lynchburg City   Roanoke City
Cumberland County   Martinsville City   Russell County
Danville City   Norfolk City   Sussex County
Franklin City   Northampton County   Waynesboro City
Fredericksburg City   Nottoway County   Wise County
Galax City

E. <u>Impact of the Teach-In on the School Divisions</u>

The responses to the survey of school divisions conducted by the Division of Teacher Education and Licensure indicate that the Teach-In was very beneficial to them.

Many of the school divisions felt that their recruitment expectations were met at the Teach-In. Figure 10 shows that of the 77 school divisions that responded to the survey, 60 school divisions (78 percent) indicated this to be the case, 21 school divisions (27 percent) indicated that their expectations had not been met, and 5 divisions (6percent) did not answer this question. Of those 21 school divisions that did not feel their expectations were met, they were careful to point out that these expectations were primarily hiring goals for the 2004-05 academic year, which in some cases exceeded 1,000 individuals, and felt that the Teach-In was a valuable experience.

Were the Recruitment Expectations of the School Divisions Met?

Yes 78%

No 16%

Did not respond 6%

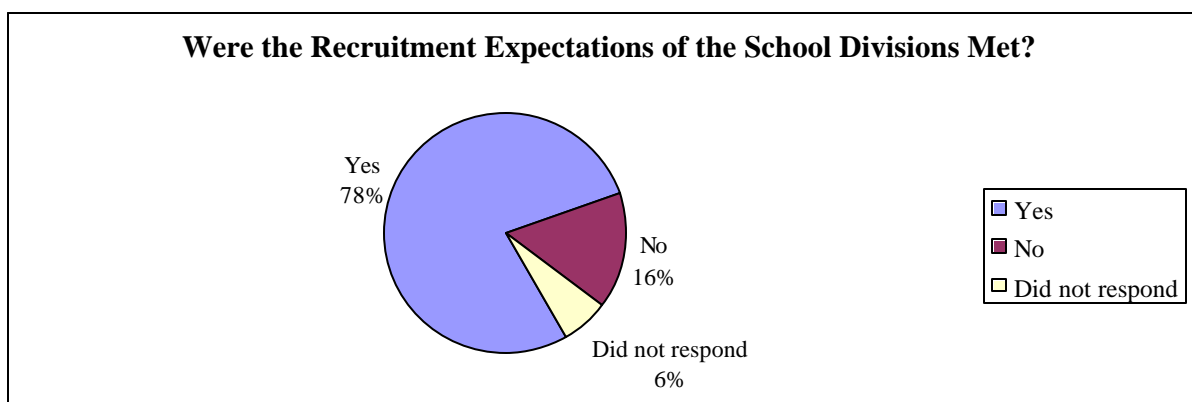Legend: Yes, No, Did not respond

Figure 10

Many school divisions were pleased with the number of quality candidates that stopped at their booths. Of the 77 respondents, 65 divisions (approximately 84 percent) reported having 50 or more visitors; 43 divisions (approximately 56 percent) reported having 100 or more visitors; and 16 divisions (21 percent) reported having 200 or more visitors (four school divisions did not report a number of visitors).

Given that the Teach-In was a first-time effort, Division of Teacher Education and Licensure staff members could not provide the school divisions with valid estimates of how many prospective teachers to expect prior to the event. This made it difficult for the divisions to commit the appropriate amount of staff and resources. Some divisions such as nearby Hanover County and Richmond City brought large teams (eight or more representatives), expecting large turnouts. Other divisions, especially those with limited staff and/or significant travel expenses to consider, committed a minimum number of representatives to the Teach-In, one individual in many cases. The number of representatives at each booth was no doubt a factor in determining how many visitors each school division could accommodate, and may help explain why many of the smaller school divisions did not report visitor numbers comparable with the much larger, better-represented divisions.

It is encouraging to note that 17 of the 28 high-poverty urban and rural school divisions reported 50 or more visitors, and that of these 17 divisions, seven of them reported 100 or more visitors (Richmond City, Northampton County, Portsmouth City, Fredericksburg City, Spotsylvania County, Charlottesville City, and Waynesboro City). Eight of the 28 either did not submit a report or did not report visitor numbers. Table 7 indicates those school divisions that had at least 100 visitors. School divisions with an asterisk had at least 200 visitors.

Table 7. School Divisions that Reported 100 or more Visitors by Superintendent's Study Region

*School divisions with an asterisk had at least 200 visitors.

Region I
Dinwiddie County
Hanover County*
Henrico County*
New Kent County*
Powhatan County
Prince George County
Richmond City*

Region II
Chesapeake City*
Isle of Wight County
Newport News City*
Northampton County
Portsmouth City
Suffolk City
Virginia Beach City*
Williamsburg-James City County
York County

Study Region III
Caroline County
Fredericksburg City
Gloucester County
Spotsylvania County*

Study Region IV
Culpeper County
Fairfax County*
Falls Church City*
Loudoun County*
Madison County
Manassas City
Orange County
Prince William County*
Rappahannock County*
Shenandoah County
Warren County

<u>Study Region V</u>
Albemarle County*
Charlottesville City
Harrisonburg City
Louisa County
Lynchburg City
Rockingham County
Staunton City
Waynesboro City*

<u>Region VI</u>
Henry County
Montgomery County
Pittsylvania County

<u>Region VII</u>
None

<u>Region VIII</u>
Amelia County*

Overall satisfaction with the Teach-In was high. Figure 11 shows that of the 77 school divisions that submitted a survey, 45 divisions gave the Teach-In a grade of five on a scale of one to five; 28 divisions gave the Teach-In a grade of four; one division gave the Teach-In a grade of three; and three divisions did not provide a grade.
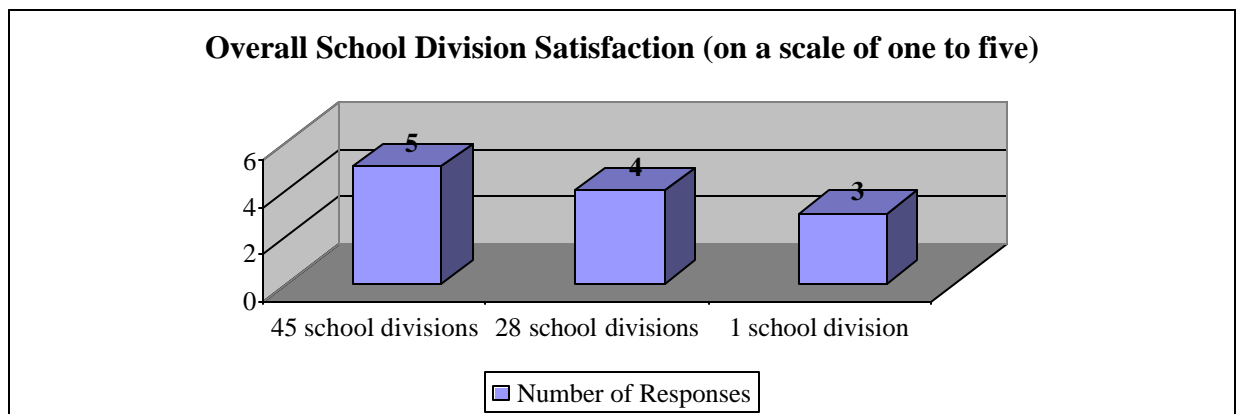

Figure 11

Figure 12 shows the average satisfaction response of the school divisions by Superintendent's Study Region.

School Division Satisfaction According to Superintendent's Study Region

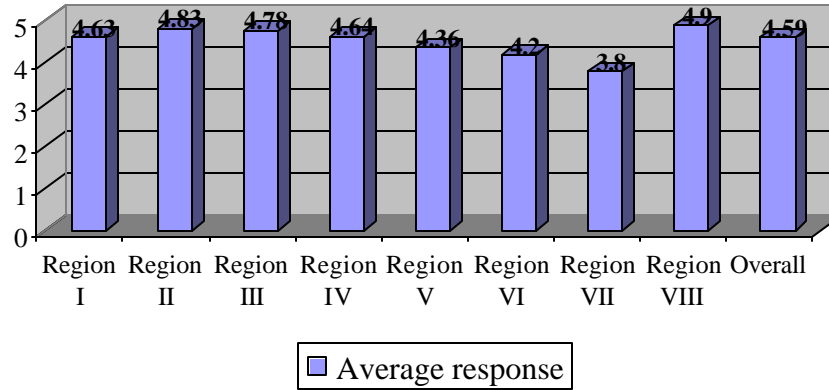| Region	Average response
Region I	4.63
Region II	4.83
Region III	4.78
Region IV	4.64
Region V	4.36
Region VI	4.2
Region VII	3.8
Region VIII	4.9
Overall	4.59

Figure 12

Perhaps the most indicative measure of the success of the Teach-In is the school division response to the question of whether they would support another Teach-In event in the future. Of the 77 responses, all 77 said "Yes."

19

III. Feedback From the School Divisions

"I was very impressed with the attendance and participation. I thought the DOE staff did an outstanding job of organizing this event."
- Steven Baker, Assistant Superintendent, Charlotte County Public Schools

"There was a wealth of applicants. I was able to interview applicants in areas of need. Please do this EVERY year. It was by far the very best recruitment effort I have been to in years."
- Gary Blair, Assistant Superintendent, Powhatan County Public Schools

"Our division hires approximately 80+ teachers per year. The Teach-In provides us with an opportunity to easily seek out candidates from many other states and universities. We of course have shortages in math, science, and special education and are able to reach out to degreed candidates through this job fair."
- Sally Blanchard, Director for Human Resources, Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools

"I thought the Teach-In was an excellent event with more teacher candidates available than at a university visitation. The Institutes were very informative also. An annual event would provide time for more information to be disseminated first hand. More would be gained in a shorter amount of time."
- Joyce Clayton, Acting Superintendent, Westmoreland County Public Schools

"Thank you for sponsoring such a great event! We found good candidates and feel this event enhanced our recruiting efforts. The vendors and licensing staff were also very helpful."
- Charla Cordle, Assistant Superintendent, Hanover County Public Schools

"For rural school divisions, the Teach-In was a tremendous effort in helping us to be exposed to a pool of potential candidates, thus providing the opportunity to employ highly qualified teachers for our divisions. Thank you for the opportunity and I would like to see it as an annual event."
- Dorothy S. Cosby, Director of Human Resources, Cumberland County Public Schools

"We talked to several hundred individuals for our four vacancies. We will be interviewing about twenty individuals for our two schools within the next two weeks. Overall it was a great opportunity to meet quality candidates for our vacancies."
- David L. Covington, Principal, Rappahannock County Elementary School

"This event was well planned and organized!"
- Darlene Faltz, Supervisor of Recruitment, Prince William County Public Schools

"Congratulations to all who had a part in planning and executing this event. It opened a new forum for candidates, especially "career switchers" and others who would not be seen in traditional campus recruitment. Excellent idea, and extremely well done."
- Larry S. Farmer, Interim Superintendent, Clarke County Public Schools

"The Teach-In was a super opportunity for Virginia divisions, thanks!"
                    - Carol S. Fenn, Assistant Superintendent, Shenandoah County Public Schools

"Thanks so much for all the effort and planning that went into this event. It was well coordinated and extremely worthwhile."
                    - Mitzi Freeberg, Director of Human Resources, Falls Church City Public Schools

"Excellent job fair in all respects. We were delighted with the turn out and the quality of applicants. We have received on-line applications as a result of the job fair, which indicate good follow up on the part of the participants. This forum provided an excellent opportunity for out of state applicants to visit and interview with many school divisions rather than only those that border their home state. This was an excellent opportunity for school divisions to have exposure to the out of state applicant without having to expend money and time in traveling to far away states. We will be delighted to support the state in future job fairs."
                    - Daniel J. Graves, Personnel Administrator, Chesapeake City Public Schools

"I would like to commend and thank individuals at the Virginia DOE for their brilliant work on this event."
                    - Michael L. Heard, Director of Human Resources, Charlottesville City Public Schools

"The Teach-In was a great event!"
                    - Helen B. Hill, Assistant Superintendent, Mecklenburg County Public Schools

"For a first time event, this was outstanding. This event is the first thing we have had in our state that compares with the major PA and NY events, and we should support it as a continuing event."
                    - James H. Holland, Director of Human Resources, Franklin City Public Schools

"The Teach-In was great! I had no idea what to expect and I was a little overwhelmed. I appreciate the support of the staff of the event. I ran out of copies and I was accommodated."
                    - Denise D. Hunt, Recruitment and Retention Coordinator, Culpeper County Public Schools

"I saw viable candidates in critical shortage areas and hard to fill positions. My suggestion would be to have the Teach-In on Friday and Saturday and eliminate Sunday."
                    - Shelli Jarvis, Human Resource Specialist, Rockingham County Public Schools

"A superlative first effort! I applaud and congratulate Dr. Thomas Elliott and the VDOE staff who worked with him to make this event happen. It was most worthwhile."
                    - Juliet C. Jennings, Assistant Superintendent, Danville City Public Schools

"The Teach-In provided many excellent candidates."
                    - Phil Jepsen, Director of Human Resources, Henrico County Public Schools

"The Teach-In experience was great! Good job!"
>   - Marsha Kilburn, Coordinator of Personnel Services, York County Public Schools

"The Teach-In was much more successful than anticipated. Next year, if held, Madison County Schools would add administrators, conduct formal interviews, and offer early intent letters to qualified applicants."
>   - Allan McLearen, Supervisor of Human Resources, Madison County Public Schools

"The Teach-In was very informative and well organized. Having applicants to come Sunday did not appear to be a good idea. Participation was poor."
>   - Charles Preston, Director of Human Resources, Henry County Public Schools

"The Great Virginia Teach-In exceeded my expectations. Our district talked to several excellent candidates. With the budget stalemate and teachers waiting for contracts to make a final decision and the fact that our district is small, I did not have many openings at the time, just projections that we may have openings. I appreciate the VDOE sponsoring this event and look forward to attending next year."
>   - Michael Robinson, Assistant Superintendent, Orange County Public Schools

"There is a need to continue to support this effort. Also, it is extremely helpful for the candidates as well as school personnel to have licensure specialists available to answer questions."
>   - Gloria Simon, Director for Personnel, Lynchburg City Public Schools

"On behalf of my superintendent, Dr. Howard B. Kiser, I take this opportunity to add a personal note of my gratitude for hosting such a timely job fair. I appreciate all the planners and anyone who took part in planning such a large event."
>   - Juanita Smith, Director of Human Resources, Gloucester County Public Schools

"The Teach-In was extremely well organized and conducted."
>   - Greg Stick, Assistant Principal, Craig County High School

"The Teach-In was very well planned and organized."
>   - Talitha Talley, Human Resources Supervisor, Portsmouth City Public Schools

"This was the most useful recruiting event I have ever participated in. When the candidates came to us we knew they were interested in coming to Caroline County. We normally recruit heavily out of state but often when we start talking seriously they are not willing to move south. All of the candidates who were at the Teach-In wanted to teach in Virginia and were interested in teaching in Caroline County. We also found the candidates to be well qualified. We also liked having the meeting on Friday and starting at lunch. It was all perfectly orchestrated. Thank you for the opportunity to participate. It is really going to help us this year!"
>   - Kaye Thomas, Assistant Superintendent, Caroline County Public Schools

IV. Lessons Learned from the Great Virginia Teach-In

Although the feedback received to date has been extremely positive, the experience of organizing the Great Virginia Teach-In has yielded a number of suggestions for improving upon the event next time, if applicable, including the following:

- o <u>Sundays</u>: Future Teach-In events should not be held on Sundays. Many participants felt that the Sunday event was not worthwhile. Some felt that recruiting should not be held on Sunday and others felt the drop-in participation was not worth their time.

- o <u>Registration</u>: Walk-in registration for participants would need to be better organized. The registration staff was not prepared for the sheer volume of walk-in participants. Additional walk-in registration lines would need to be created.

- o <u>Orientation Session for School Division Personnel</u>: A formal Great Virginia Teach-In orientation session would need to be held with school divisions and other groups before the Teach-In event. Although the Great Virginia Teach-In planning team made great efforts to communicate with division participants, many questions were left unanswered until the day of the event.

- o <u>Interview Areas</u>: Interview areas for school divisions should be closer to the assigned division recruiting booth. Some school divisions chose not to interview away from their assigned booth. The orientation session would be helpful to accommodate school division preferences on how interviews would be conducted.

- o <u>School Division Booths</u>: School division booths should be numbered. The vendor who built the booths actually suggested that the numbers be left off the booths this time just in case school divisions registered at the last minute. Numbering the booths would make it easier for personnel working the event to give directions to participants who wish to visit specific school divisions.

- o <u>Institutes</u>: Institutes should be shortened rather than held as full day events. Event planners found that four o'clock was too late to hold participants during an institute. Many participants felt torn that they could not attend all the sessions they would have liked to due to their participation at an institute.

- o <u>Water</u>: Water should be supplied throughout the venue. We would ask the Greater Richmond Convention Center to place additional water stations throughout the event.